United Nations CEDAW/C/2004/I/3/Add.1

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
10 December 2003

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Thirtieth session
12-30 January 2004
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Report provided by the specialized agencies of the United Nations on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

1. On 19 September 2003, the Secretariat, on behalf of the Committee, invited the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to submit a report to the Committee on information provided by States to FAO on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in areas falling within the scope of its activities, which would supplement the information contained in the reports of the States parties to the Convention that will be considered at the thirtieth session.

2. Other information sought by the Committee refers to activities, programmes and policy decisions undertaken by FAO to promote the implementation of the Convention.

3. The report annexed hereto has been submitted in compliance with the Committee's request.

* CEDAW/C/2004/I/1.
** The present document was submitted late due to a delay in receiving the information from FAO.

03-64966 (E) 070104

Annex

Report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for submission to the thirtieth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Bhutan

Bhutan's total population estimate for 2001 was 1.9 million, of which 49.4 per cent were women. Of the total population of the country, 93 per cent lived in rural areas. In 2001, it was estimated that 48 per cent of the population was economically active, of which 94 per cent worked in the agricultural sector. The proportion of economically active women was 40 per cent, of whom 98 per cent were working in agriculture.

Activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the empowerment of rural women and gender equality

In order to fulfil its mandate to provide information on rural women, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has developed a fact sheet on Bhutan to highlight the participation of rural women in agriculture, environment and rural production. This fact sheet traces a gender profile of agriculture, environment and rural economies and explains the role of rural women in food security. It also includes recommendations for gender responsive policies and programme planning in Bhutan.

In collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), FAO implemented a project entitled "National strategy for stoves and alternative energy sources in Bhutan". The primary objective of the project was to provide the Government of Bhutan with a comprehensive assessment of fuel wood consumption and with alternative options for energy production, with implications for rural women's access to a wide range of energy resource alternatives. In this process, the National Women's Association of Bhutan played an important role in highlighting gender issues, women being the most important fuel wood consumers in Bhutan.

Bhutan participated in all the FAO-sponsored regional meetings that set the agenda for regional strategies in distance education and agro-biodiversity conservation, taking into account the role and interests of rural women.

Ethiopia

In 2002, Ethiopia's total population was estimated at 69.1 million, of which about 50 per cent were women. Of the total population of the country, 84 per cent lived in rural areas. In 2002, it was estimated that 24 per cent of the women were economically active, with around 80 per cent working in the agricultural sector.

Activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the empowerment of rural women and gender equality

FAO recently launched a pilot project on agro-biodiversity and indigenous knowledge, knowledge which is being lost as a result of the spread of HIV/AIDS. The purpose of the project is to develop field-level methodologies that will enable communities to record, store and share agro-biodiversity and indigenous knowledge both within and between communities. This will contribute to the improvement of their nutrition, easing their workloads, providing medicinal relief and securing more sustainable livelihoods in the face of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Specific attention will be paid to the differentiated roles, rights and needs of women and men.

FAO is also implementing a technical capacity-building project, aiming at improving nutrition and household food security in northern Shoa and the southern zone of Tigray. The project considers gender and socio-economic issues at all levels, from community action planning, through targeting of interventions, to capacity-building in support organizations. The participatory monitoring and evaluation process is designed in a way that allows gender and socio-economic differentiation in terms of access, control and benefits.

A survey undertaken in 2003 revealed that the total number of female-headed households in project areas is within the range of 28 to 36 per cent (depending on the *Woreda* selected), with illiteracy among females of roughly 90 per cent for the entire population surveyed. The high level of illiteracy acutely limits women's ability to use the new technologies available, to assimilate the information for small-scale enterprise development and, importantly, to improve nutrition for their families. The study concluded that women-headed households are among the most deprived in the country. Additionally, FAO, through its project "Strengthening seed supply systems at the local level", aims to increase the participation of women in seed production, quality control and marketing. Building on the important role women play in post-harvest handling and marketing/petty trade, the project strengthens the capacity of women's groups in the basic techniques of seed post-harvest handling and storage. In addition, women are assisted with vegetable and orchard seedlings production and are provided with beehives for their home compounds.

FAO, through its TeleFood activities, is supporting several projects in Ethiopia, including projects for women in vegetable production and sheep husbandry, as well as restocking female-headed households with goats in times of drought.

From 1994 to 1996, FAO also implemented a pilot project in Ethiopia aimed at initiating client-oriented agricultural extension planning based on the use of participatory approaches and gender analysis. The project was used as a case study in the more general publication entitled, *From farmer to planner and back: Harvesting best practices*,[1] illustrating participatory and gender-sensitive development planning.

Kyrgyzstan

The population of Kyrgyzstan in 2001 was nearly 5 million, of which 65.8 per cent lived in rural areas. In 2001, it was estimated that 44.5 per cent of the population was economically active, with 25 per cent working in the agricultural

sector. The share of economically active women represented 47.2 per cent, of which 19.7 per cent were working in agriculture.

Activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the empowerment of rural women and gender equality

In July 2003, FAO conducted a workshop on gender-disaggregated data for agricultural and rural development in the Kyrgyz Republic, as part of its Socioeconomic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) programme. Twenty-one participants from Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan attended the workshop, the purpose of which was to build capacity for production, analysis and interpretation of gender-disaggregated data for policy analysis and formulation. The workshop also afforded the opportunity to test and adapt the Russian-language gender-disaggregated data training materials developed by FAO for wider use in Russian-speaking countries.

SEAGA training materials translated into Russian to date include the field and intermediate level handbooks and the irrigation, microfinance and project cycle guides.

Nepal

The population of Nepal in 2001 was 23.6 million, of which 88 per cent lived in rural areas. In 2001, it was estimated that 47 per cent of the population was economically active, with 93 per cent working in the agricultural sector. The proportion of economically active women was 39 per cent, of which 98 per cent were working in agriculture.

Activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the empowerment of rural women and gender equality

Nepal is one of the beneficiaries of the FAO regional project for the empowerment of women in irrigation and water resources management for household food security and health (WIN-Project). The overall development objective of the project is to enhance the opportunities for rural women to improve household food security and to raise income through the introduction of low-cost and water-saving technologies for irrigated crop production. It envisages direct support to ensure the involvement of women in mainstream activities and to increase their access to productive resources and appropriate low-cost irrigation technologies. The project interventions have been directed to improve community-based partnerships, particularly women's groups and NGO linkages, and to facilitate their access to water resources and their nutritional knowledge and practices.

Through TeleFood, FAO is also active in the Bhaktapur district in Nepal's Kathmandu Valley, where it has helped the Creative Women's Group, composed of 52 women, to build a small processing plant in the heart of the traditional spice-growing area. This support allows them to grind and sell the spices they grow instead of having to sell them to outside mills, for a very low price. The TeleFood Fund also paid for the building, dryers, mills, scales and heat sealers for packaging, while the Nepalese Government provided training and guidance.

FAO also compiled a fact sheet on Nepal entitled: *Women in agriculture, environment and rural production*, which traces a gender profile in agriculture, environment and rural economies, highlighting the role of rural women in food security. The fact sheet also focuses on gender responsive policies and programme planning in Nepal.

Nepal was also represented in all the FAO-sponsored regional meetings that set the agenda for regional strategies in distance education and technology transfer for rural women.

Between 1996 and 1999, FAO implemented a pilot project entitled: "Improving information on women's contribution to agricultural production for gender-sensitive planning". The project became a case study in the more general publication *From farmer to planner and back: Harvesting best practices*,[1] illustrating participatory and gender-sensitive development planning.

In 2001, FAO representation in Nepal took the lead in establishing a set of gender-responsive personnel policies (regulations), including facilities for breastfeeding mothers and an allowance for childcare-givers for the children of female staff while they are engaged in field visits, projects or other undertakings that keep them from home.

Nigeria

The population of Nigeria in 2001 was nearly 117 million, of which 55 per cent lived in rural areas. In 2001, it was estimated that 40 per cent of the population was economically active, with 32 per cent working in the agricultural sector. The share of economically active women was 36 per cent, of which 34 per cent were working in agriculture.

Activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the empowerment of rural women and gender equality

Through the Dimitra project, FAO collects detailed information on organizations and projects concerning rural women, food security and sustainable development in Europe, Africa and in the Near East. By making this information available, the project aims to increase the visibility of the contributions of rural women to development via traditional means of communication and new information technologies. Dimitra seeks to increase gender awareness among development actors and to promote information exchange and dissemination. There are 24 organizations from Nigeria listed in the Dimitra database (www.fao.org/sd/dimitra). These organizations have been engaged in a total of 57 projects.

Notes

[1] http://www.fao.org/sd/2003/PE0103_en.htm.